



American University College Republicans

Friday, February 24, 2012

Remarks by Gov. Jan Brewer

Good Evening, American University College Republicans!

It's a great honor to be here -- on the campus of American University -- home of the school famous for hosting political leaders from all over the world -- presidents, senators -- congressmen.

And, speaking of Congress ...

Once in awhile Congress does get something right -- and, believe it or not -- on this very day -- one hundred and nineteen years ago -- Congress got it right -- establishing The American University -- "The place where world events and students meet."

I should tell you that I have a personal connection – of sorts -- to the campus, because not far from here in Anderson Hall, my good friend and political consultant, Doug Cole, was cutting his political teeth as an SIS student and a 1985 cum laude graduate.

Before I get started, I do want to clear up one thing. When I met President Obama at the Phoenix airport last month, the greeting wasn't as hostile as the media reported.

I really wasn't pointing at him.

He just asked me how he was doing in Arizona ... and that's when I held up my finger, and said: "You have one more year!"

You know, the President needs to be reminded that he is the president of a federal republic and not a king lording over state governors.

I'm reminded of President Obama whenever I think of that line in the movie "Braveheart" -- when William Wallace says to Lord Craig, -- "There is a difference between us. You think the people of this country exist to provide you with position. I think your position exists to provide those people with freedom. And I go to make sure that they have it."

Here's a newsflash for the President: "You can try to ignore me, you can sue me and you can even walk away when I'm talking to you. However, this is one governor who will not back down until you do your duty for the State of Arizona and America!"

I confess, I do have a steel spine.

It's genetic. I inherited it from my mother --

**Edna Drinkwine -- the most important mentor in my life -
- the true heroine in my book, "Scorpions for Breakfast."**

You see, I know what it's like to be a single mom, struggling to make ends meet, while caring for your family.

I saw my mother do it after my father died.

She had never worked outside the home, but my mother knew she had to support her family -- my brother and me.

With meager savings, she bought a small dress shop, and I worked side-by-side with her until the time she sold it when I was 20 years old.

That dress shop was, really, a classroom for me – where I learned the importance of hard work, responsibility, honesty, integrity -- and yes, courage -- from my mother's example.

I think about my mother every day -- especially since I was challenged with the opportunity to become Governor of Arizona.

I say “challenged” because I inherited the worst state budget deficit in the nation!

Well, I am my mother’s daughter. I was up to this challenge. I'm a problem solver.

I made a lot of painful decisions while fighting to bring Arizona back from the brink.

But, we did it. Arizona is back from the brink.

We now have a balanced budget and a positive cash balance for the first time in years.

Our state government is smaller and compared to the population we serve – our workforce is one of the most efficient in the nation.

We've rescaled our state's largest entitlement program to fit the budget we have -- not the budget we want.

We've consolidated, eliminated or privatized operations across state government. In the history of this state, no other Governor has cut state government more than I have.

Meanwhile, education in Arizona is being transformed. Called Arizona Ready, we're engaging families across

the state to take charge of their children's education and to expect more from their public schools.

Our reform initiatives include adoption of higher academic standards to make sure our students can compete with the best in the world -- and prohibiting employment policies that give retention priority to teachers based on seniority.

Seventeen years after we adopted the Charter School Law, Arizona is on its second generation of 15-year charter schools -- including the best charter schools in the nation.

Now, fixing what afflicts our great nation will not be so easy.

However, if there's one thing I learned from my mother and my years of public service it's that life is about choices.

It's that doing the right thing, almost always means doing the hard thing.

It's choosing what's tough over what's tempting.

It's choosing the truthful over the false.

Here's a little pop quiz for you – but, you don't need to get out your exam papers. Grades will not be recorded, so relax.

Who remembers that President Obama promised in 2009 he'd cut the federal budget deficit in half?

**In fact, he's accumulated more debt than any president -
- and in a shorter period of time.**

Who remembers that the Obama Administration promised in 2009 it would keep unemployment below 8 percent -- if the stimulus package passed?

In fact, America lost over a million jobs since Obama's stimulus plan passed, and unemployment is still over 8 percent.

Who remembers we were told that President Obama's housing plan -- announced in Arizona -- would "Stem the spread of foreclosures and falling home values for all Americans"?

In fact, housing prices have dropped by more than they did during the Great Depression.

And, who remembers that the Obama Administration proclaimed "the border was more secure than ever"?

In fact, our own military leaders said recently that the country lacks a comprehensive border security plan.

And, what does President Obama do -- he sues the State of Arizona -- and me -- for doing his job!

This November, Americans will make a choice about what's right and what's wrong for our country's future.

Here's what I believe ...

Wrong is destroying all the jobs associated with the Keystone Pipeline and forcing Canada to sell the oil to China.

Wrong is the Obama administration taking 1 million acres in northern Arizona out of consideration for uranium mining – a decision that we estimate will cost the Arizona economy more than \$10 billion worth of economic activity over the next two decades – not to mention good jobs in a rural area of our state.

Wrong is our federal government shipping guns to the Mexican cartels in the Fast-and-Furious Operation . . . and no one in Washington taking responsibility.

Wrong is allowing those guns to be used by border gangs to shoot a brave and noble border patrol agent -- Agent Brian Terry.

So, what's right you ask?

Right is calling a terrorist ... well . . . a terrorist!

Right is being free to work hard, play by the rules -- and succeed beyond your wildest dreams -- without someone telling you that you're making too much money.

Right is looking President Obama square in the eye, as I did in my meeting with him in White House, and saying: "Mr. President, Do your job. Secure Our Border. Sir, that's what you were elected to do . . . so do it!"

I'm sure many of you know about the iPhone application called Shazam – it's used to identify a song – and it has quick links to iTunes and YouTube -- and it allows you to share the song via e-mail.

So, wouldn't it be great if there were an application that you could use to hold your phone up to a problem you're having – to some difficult decision you're facing - - and the phone would tell you what was the right thing to do?

Well, there is an application like that.

It's called your mind.

It's called your conscience.

It's called your faith.

It's called your family.

Those things guide each and every one of us in public service in our daily decision-making -- and we don't need a fancy iPhone to help us make the right -- though many times difficult -- decision.

So, let me add here one additional piece of advice:

Prepare for the future ... with a promise for today -- promise that you will always honor those who love you ... listen to the great teachers who guide you ... and never abandon the dreams that inspire you.

I thank you for allowing me to spend some time with you today.

It's been an honor for me to look at you and know our future is in such good hands –guided by such wonderful minds.

May God bless you and the American University College Republicans, may He bless your paths wherever they lead, and may God always bless and protect the United States of America.

Thank you.